REMARKS

Claims 1-21, and 45-57 remain in the application. Claims 45-54 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. Claims 22-44 have been cancelled.

THE REJECTION

Claims 1-21 and 55-57 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Hannington et al, WO 01/81080 A1.

The Examiner's Rejection

Hannington et al disclose an adhesive article (claim 1, line 1) comprising: a release liner comprising a release surface (claim 1, lines 2 and 3), a molding layer (claim 1, line 2) and a second surface (claim 1, lines 2 and 3); a continuous layer of adhesive having a first surface, a second surface and end edges (claim 1, lines 7-9), wherein the first surface of the adhesive is adhered to the release surface of the release liner (claim 1, lines 7-9); a first pattern of first non-adhesive material forms having a first surface and a second surface (claim 1, lines 4-5); and a second pattern of second non-adhesive material forms having a first surface and a second surface (claim 22, lines 1-4), wherein the second pattern partially overlaps the first pattern (page 8, paragraph 30); at least one of the first and second patterns is at least partially embedded in the release surface and molding layer of the release liner (claim 1, line 6); the first surface of each of the two patterns is in contact with the release surface of the release liner (claim 1, line 6), the second surface of each of the two patterns is in contact with the adhesive layer (claim 1, lines 7-9); and the first surface of at least a portion of the first pattern of non-adhesive material forms is in a plane that is different from the plane of the first surface of at least a portion of the second pattern of non-adhesive material forms (page 8, paragraph 30) in claim 1. As in claims 2, each of the non-adhesive material forms independently has an average thickness of about 30 nanometers to about 100 μm (page 8, paragraph 30). With regard to claim 3, each of the non-adhesive material forms independently has an average thickness of about 3 μm to about 30 μm (page 8, paragraph 30). Regarding claim 4, each pattern of non-

adhesive material forms independently is applied by printing, vacuum metallization or sputtering (claim 6). As in claim 5, at least one of the non-adhesive materials independently comprises at lest one printing ink, UV curable ink or coalescing ink (claims 15-17). With regard to claim 6, each pattern of non-adhesive material forms independently comprises a plurality of dots, lines or combinations thereof (page 8, paragraph 30). Regarding claim 7, each pattern of non-adhesive material forms independently comprises a plurality of lines having an average width of from about 12 μm to about 250 μm and an average thickness of from about 30 nanometers to about 100 μm (page 8, paragraph 30). With regard to claim 8, the each pattern of non-adhesive material forms independently comprises a plurality of lines, and wherein at least 50% of the lines intersect the end edges of the adhesive layer (claim 25). As in claim 9, each pattern of non-adhesive material forms comprises a plurality of non-intersecting lines, and wherein the lines from the first pattern and the lines from the second pattern intersect to form a grid pattern (page 8, paragraph 30). Regarding claim 10, the adhesive layer comprises a pressure sensitive adhesive or a heat-activated adhesive (claims 23 and 24). With regard to claim 11, at least one of the first and second non-adhesive material comprises a porous non-adhesive material (claim 18). As in claim 12, the porous non-adhesive material comprises an elastomer (claim 19). As in claim 13, the adhesive is a pressure sensitive adhesive (claim 23). Regarding claim 14, the release surface of the release liner has a textured or matte surface (claims 11 and 12). With regard to claim 15, the first surface of the adhesive layer has a textured surface that is complementary to the textured surface of the release liner (page 13, paragraph 41). As in claim 16, the release surface of the release liner has a Sheffield roughness of at least about 50 (claim 10). Regarding claim 17, the article further comprising a facestock adhered to the second surface of the adhesive layer (claim 2). With regard to claim 18, the article further comprising a second release liner adhered to the second surface of the adhesive layer (claim 26). As in claim 19, the second surface of the release liner has a release coating thereon (claim 27). Regarding claim 20, the article further comprising a facestock having a first and second surface wherein the first surface is in contact with the second surface of the adhesive

layer and a second adhesive layer having a first and second surface wherein the first surface of the second adhesive layer is in contact with the second surface of the facestock (claims 28 and 29). With regarding to claim 20, the article further comprising a second release liner adhered to the second surface of the second adhesive layer (claim 26). Hannington et al. also disclose an adhesive article (claim 1) comprising: a continuous layer of adhesive having a first surface, a second surface and end edges (claim 1, lines 7-9), and a first pattern of first non-adhesive material forms (claim 1, lines 4 and 5) and a second pattern of second non-adhesive material forms wherein the second pattern partially overlaps the first pattern (claim 22); at least one of said first and second patterns is at least partially embedded in the first surface of the adhesive layer (claims 1 and 22); each of said first and second patterns has an exposed first surface and an opposite second surface that is in contact with the adhesive (claims 1 and 22); the first surface of at least a portion of the first pattern of non-adhesive forms is in a plane that is different from the plane of the first surface of at least a portion of the second pattern of non-adhesive forms (claims 1 and 22); and at least a portion of the first pattern protrudes from the first surface of the adhesive layer (claims 1 and 22) as in claim 55. As in claim 56, the article further comprising a facestock adhered to the second surface of the adhesive layer (claim 2). With regard to claim 57, the article further comprising a release liner adhered to the second surface of the adhesive layer (claim 26).

Applicant's Response

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims based on the cited WO 080 are requested.

Independent claims 1 and 55 describe an adhesive article comprising a first pattern of non-adhesive material forms and a second pattern of non-adhesive material forms wherein the second pattern partially overlaps the first pattern.

Contrary to the Examiner's suggestion at page 2 of the Office Action, the reference does not teach a first pattern of a first-non-adhesive material forms and a second pattern of second non-adhesive material forms "wherein the second pattern

partially overlaps the first pattern (page 8, paragraph 30)". There is no mention of overlapping patterns in paragraph 30.

Paragraph 30 of the prior art states that the non-adhesive material "is generally present as a pattern". The pattern can be a plurality of dots, lines or any geometric figure, that provides a path for air egress in the adhesive article. "The pattern may be a grid of intersecting lines, a weave pattern, a waffle pattern, diagonal, straight and curve lines, tiled geometric figures, such as hexagons, rectangles, overlapping circles or triangles, or lines in a cross hash pattern." The prior art teaches that the above configurations comprise "a pattern" or "the pattern". The prior art then states on page 9, paragraph 30 that "combinations of patterns may be used such as a grid of intersecting lines with random or patterned dots. The "intersecting lines" of the prior art comprise one pattern, and the random or patterned dots comprise a second pattern. There is no teaching or suggestion in paragraph 30 that the pattern of dots overlaps the grid of intersecting lines.

Similarly, in paragraph 55, which describes an embodiment wherein the adhesive article of the prior art contains an extremely thin interconnecting pattern of non-adhesive material and a thicker pattern of microdots, the thin interconnecting pattern is considered to be one pattern, and the thicker pattern of microdots is considered to be a second pattern. There is no teaching or suggestion that the two patterns should overlap.

The Examiner's statement regarding claim 9 found on page 3, namely,

> As in claim 9, each pattern of non-adhesive material forms comprises a plurality of non-intersecting lines and wherein the lines from the first pattern and the lines from the second pattern intersect to form a grid pattern. (Page 8, paragraph 30).

is not supported on page 8 or anywhere else in the cited reference. In paragraph 30 (and in paragraph 55), the grid of intersecting lines constitutes a single pattern, and the dots comprise a second pattern. Moreover, there is no teaching or suggestion in the reference that the dots and the grid of intersecting lines overlap.

Accordingly, the rejection of independent claims 1 and 55 and the claims dependent therefrom should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above comments, the Examiner is requested to withdraw the rejection of claims 1-21 and 55-57 and to allow these claims. An early action to this effect is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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